

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) In a general-purpose computer system, a lending library apparatus comprising:

an electronic asset lending library database containing a plurality of user accounts and at least one license for an ~~unused~~ electronic asset ~~loaned~~ assigned by a user having one of the plurality of user accounts;

an account manager to maintain the user accounts;

an asset manager to maintain the licenses for the ~~unused~~ electronic assets; and

a loan manager to control the ~~borrowing of~~ assignment of the license for the unused electronic asset ~~by to~~ another user having another one of the plurality of user accounts;

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a notification manager to notify an assignee of the license for the electronic asset borrower when the loan manager approves a ~~loan~~ an assignment to the ~~borrower~~ assignee of the license for the ~~unused~~ electronic asset.

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein:

the account manager further maintains a subset of the plurality of user accounts as members of a one of a plurality of communities;

the asset manager further maintains ownership of the license by one of the communities;

and

the loan manager restricts the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of the license for the ~~unused~~ electronic asset to a ~~borrower~~ an assignee having a user account ~~membership~~ in the ~~same~~ community having ownership of the license.

4. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 3-1, wherein:

the account manager further maintains a subset of the plurality of user accounts as members of a one of a plurality of access control lists;

the asset manager further maintains an association between the access control list and the ~~unused~~ electronic asset; and

the loan manager further restricts the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of the license for the ~~unused~~ electronic asset to a ~~borrower~~ an assignee having a user account ~~listed in the~~ an access control list associated with the ~~unused~~ electronic asset.

5. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the access control list restriction is overridden in response to a request by a ~~borrower~~ an assignee not having a user account ~~listed in the~~ access control list associated with the ~~unused~~ electronic asset.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the ~~borrower~~ assignee notification is an electronic message addressed to the ~~borrower~~ assignee and containing written instructions for installing ~~for downloading~~ the ~~unused~~ electronic asset.

8. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the notification is communicated over a communications network.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the communications network is the Internet.

10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:
an electronic distribution mechanism to ~~automatically~~ install the ~~unused~~ electronic asset on the ~~borrower's~~ assignee's computer in response to the ~~loan~~ approval of an assignment of a license corresponding to the electronic asset.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 3, wherein a community is one of a plurality of types of intra-organizational entities, including a project team, department, or division.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing:~~ An article of manufacture comprising:
an electronically accessible medium providing instructions that, when executed by an apparatus, cause the apparatus to
managing manage a plurality of user accounts;
managing manage at least one license for an ~~unused~~ electronic asset ~~loaned~~ assigned by a user having one of the plurality of user accounts;
controlling control the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of the at least one license for the ~~unused~~ electronic asset ~~by~~ to another user having another one of the plurality of user accounts; and
notifying notify the ~~borrower~~ assignee when a ~~loan~~ an assignment to the ~~borrower~~ assignee of the license for the ~~unused~~ electronic asset is approved.

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13. (Original) The ~~computer-readable medium~~ article of manufacture of claim 12, wherein the electronically accessible medium providing instructions that, when executed by the apparatus, cause the apparatus
to managing manage the plurality of user accounts includes instructions to cause the apparatus to associating associate each user account with a one of a plurality of communities;
to managing manage the license includes instructions to cause the apparatus to associating associating associate the license with a one of the plurality of communities and assigning assign the license to one of the plurality of user accounts; and
controlling control the assignment of the at least one license further includes instructions to cause the apparatus to restricting restrict the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of the license to eligible ~~borrowers~~ assignees, wherein an eligible ~~borrower~~ assignee is associated with the same community as the license.

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~computer-readable medium~~ article of manufacture of claim 13 ~~having computer-executable instructions for further performing: wherein the~~ electronically accessible medium providing instructions that, when executed by an apparatus, further cause the apparatus to
displaying display the ~~unused~~ electronic asset; and

~~reassigning~~ reassign the license of the ~~unused~~ electronic asset to another one of the plurality of user accounts in response to a selection of the ~~unused~~ electronic asset from the display by a ~~borrower~~ an assignee using the another one of the plurality of user accounts.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~computer-readable-medium~~ article of manufacture of claim 14 wherein: the electronically accessible medium providing instructions that, when executed by the apparatus, cause the apparatus

managing manage the plurality of user accounts includes instructions that cause the apparatus to adding add or deleting delete each user account into at least one of a plurality of access control lists ~~or not~~;

managing manage the license includes instructions that cause the apparatus to associating associate the ~~unused~~ electronic asset with a one of the plurality of access control lists; and

controlling control the assignment of the at least one license further includes instructions that cause the apparatus to restricting restrict the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of a license to a ~~borrower~~ an assignee listed on the access control list to which the electronic asset is assigned.

16. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

managing a plurality of user accounts;

managing licenses for a plurality of ~~unused~~ electronic assets;

receiving a request from a user of one of the plurality of user accounts to ~~loan~~ assign ~~another unused~~ an electronic asset to another user of another of the plurality of user accounts;

generating a license and associated license restrictions for the ~~another unused~~ electronic asset according to the restrictions specified by the user requesting the assignment ~~loan~~;

adding the license of the ~~another unused~~ electronic asset to the plurality of managed ~~unused~~ electronic assets; and

controlling the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of each license for the plurality of ~~unused~~ electronic assets ~~by a borrower~~ to an assignee having one of the plurality of user accounts.

17. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein:

managing the plurality of user accounts includes associating each user account with a one of a plurality of communities;

managing the licenses includes associating each license with one of the plurality of communities and assigning each license to one of the plurality of user accounts; and
controlling further includes restricting the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of licenses to ~~eligible borrowers, wherein an eligible borrower~~ an assignee who is associated with the same community as the license.

18. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the one of a plurality of communities is an organizational entity, including a division, department or team.
19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, further comprising displaying the plurality of ~~unused~~ electronic assets.
20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 19, further comprising receiving a selection of one of the plurality of ~~unused~~ electronic assets from the display by a ~~borrower~~ an assignee using one of the plurality of user accounts, approving a ~~loan~~ an assignment of the ~~unused~~ electronic asset to the ~~borrower~~ assignee based on the license restrictions associated with the ~~unused~~ electronic asset, and reassigning the license for the ~~unused~~ electronic asset to the ~~borrower's~~ assignee's user account.
21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16, wherein:
managing the plurality of user accounts includes adding or deleting each user account into at least one of a plurality of access control lists ~~or not~~;
managing the license includes associating the ~~unused~~ electronic asset with a one of the plurality of access control lists; and
controlling further includes restricting the ~~borrowing~~ assignment of a license to a ~~borrower~~ an assignee listed on the access control list to which the electronic asset is assigned.
22. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method comprising:
managing a plurality of user accounts;

generating a license and associated license restrictions for an ~~unused~~ electronic asset on a lending library server, the ~~unused~~ electronic asset ~~loaned~~ assigned by a ~~lender~~ user having one of the plurality of user accounts;

displaying to a ~~borrower~~ an assignee having another one of the plurality of user accounts the license and associated license restrictions on a lending library client;

receiving a ~~borrower~~ an assignee's selection for the license and transferring the license to the ~~borrower~~ assignee if eligible in accordance with the associated license restrictions; and

transmitting to the ~~borrower~~ assignee instructions for the installation of the ~~unused~~ electronic asset in compliance with the transferred license on the lending library client.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the lending library server and the lending library client are connected to a communications network.
24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22, wherein the associated license restrictions require the ~~borrower~~ assignee to belong to a community, the community being the same community to which the ~~unused~~ electronic asset belongs.
25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 24, wherein the associated license restrictions further require the ~~borrower~~ assignee to be listed on an access control list associated with the ~~unused~~ electronic asset.
26. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the community is an organizational entity, including a division, department or team.
27. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electronic asset lending library database resides on a removable data storage device.
28. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 27, wherein the data storage device is a CD-ROM or a DVD-ROM.